

The Passing Show

Can Bette Davis Have Seen Too Many B. Davis Movies?

By Jay Carmody

This may be a wicked thing to say but Bette Davis has been seeing too many Bette Davis pictures.

Still this seems the one plausible explanation for her acceptance of such a script as "Another Man's Poison," which showed up yesterday at the Warner Theater. Only an actress furiously bent upon setting a new record for submerging her sex in evil would have tackled such a character, a heroine so poisonous that she would have sent the Borgias screaming for their mother.

This time, however, Miss Davis set her sights too low with the result that her murderess comes off as a comedy caricature at which there is nothing to do but laugh, although maybe a little eerily at that.

As a matter of fact, the last shot is one of Miss Davis shrieking with insane laughter which may, or may not, be her own private comment on what she has just been up to.

"Another Man's Poison," made in England, is listed as a Douglas Fairbanks Jr. production and it carries a pretty lasting impression that Miss Davis should watch his next job offer more closely.

The fact that it is a mystery melodrama imposes upon reviewers a moral duty not to go too deeply into the plot. This is a lucky break for any man who otherwise would be forced to admit that the story of "Another Man's Poison" is indescribable.

However, the film presents Miss Davis as a heroine who lives in a bleak house on the Yorkshire moors, writes murder mysteries, maims whatever men she does not kill, and reserves the whole of her honest affection for a horse. As anyone can see, this is an odd type of woman and certainly one whose personality suggests that murder writers should not be so carried away by their work.

From the first dark scene in which she makes a furtive telephone call from a railroad station, Miss Davis is kept in a frenzy by her impersonation of this Janet Frobisher.

A woman less skilled in the art of contriving best seller murder stories would have quit right there. Not Miss Davis' Janet. She keeps thinking she has an artistic duty to get her life untangled and goes home to tell her horse that, with her devotion and encouragement, this is exactly what she will do.

One thing she has not anticipated, however, is that waiting for her inside the house is Gerald Merrill (her real life husband)

"ANOTHER MAN'S POISON," a United Artists picture, produced by Douglas Fairbanks Jr. and Daniel M. Angel, directed by Lewis Rapper, screened by Val Guest, from the play "Deadlock" by Leslie Sands. At the Ambassador and the Warner.

The Cast: Janet Frobisher.....Bette Davis
George Bates.....Garry Merrill
Dr. Henderson.....Emlyn Williams
Laurie.....Anthony Steel
Chris.....Barbara Murray
Mrs. Hastings.....Reginald Beckwith
Edna Morris.....Edna Morris

who, in his masculine way, is as surprised with evil as Miss Frobisher herself. Once they have met, Director Irving Rapper's cameras settle down upon one of the oddest and most violent courtships ever photographed.

At the end of this romance, including the horse, are dead.

"Another Man's Poison" is based upon a play, "Deadlock," written by Leslie Sands. On the stage, where Miss Frobisher undoubtedly was not required to talk to her horse, the key woman character might have been actable. Under the enormously magnifying eye of the camera, not even Miss Davis can keep her from becoming steadily more incredible.

Merrill's role, that of the man whose poison Miss Davis is, turns out to be equally exaggerated. For the most part, probably following the stage script, Director Rapper confines these two snarling humans to the heroine's Bleak House. In its limited confines where they are constantly wrestling for guns or bottles of poison, the surprise is that two smart people never thought of pushing the other down the always inviting stairway from the bedroom balcony.

Nearest to a credible performance among the weird ones on display at the Warner is that of Emlyn Williams as the neighborhood veterinarian. In his guise as animal doctor, this man is really an amateur psychologist. Naturally, he has a field day dabbling in the affairs of two such people next door as Miss Davis and Merrill.

A couple of other human touches to the film are supplied by Anthony Steel who plays the role of a snakey lover who escapes Miss Davis' coils, and by Barbara Murray as a nice girl who is mighty ill at ease in the eerie moor country.

My, my!



NONSTOP—Stanley Holloway, who plays the second mastermind in "The Lavender Hill Mob," the British comedy melodrama now in its 11th week at the Plaza Theater.

came in, only that was a long time ago. Either all of this (and more) takes place in "Pandora and the Flying Dutchman" or a movie reviewer's wife served him hashish instead of coffee yesterday morning.

Only a few postscripts need be appended to this report. Some of the Technicolor photography is handsome. Mr. Mason comes out better in the battle with the complicated script than Miss Gardner. The supporting roles are played by British actors who seem determined, dash it all, to be polite even if trapped.

Al Morgan, "Virtuoso of the Flying Hands," headlines the Capitol's stage show and others on hand are Don Cumming, Lot and Jo Anders and Vince and Gloria Haycock.

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Where and When
Current Theater Attractions
And Time of Showing

Stage.
Arena—"School for Scandal"; 8:30 p.m.
New Gayety—"The Student Prince"; 8:30 p.m.
Screen.
Ambassador—"Another Man's Poison"; 1:00, 3:05, 5:15, 7:20 and 9:35 p.m.
Capitol—"Pandora and the Flying Dutchman"; 10:30 a.m., 1:20, 4:10, 7:00 and 9:50 p.m. Stage: 12:40, 3:30, 6:20 and 9:10 p.m.
Columbia—"Cave of Outlaws"; 11:55 a.m., 1:55, 4:00, 6:00, 8:05 and 10:10 p.m.
Dupont—"Tales of Hoffmann"; 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30 and 9:40 p.m.
Keith's—"I Want You"; 11:30 a.m., 1:35, 3:40, 5:50, 7:55 and 10 p.m.
Little—"Pool of London"; 6:20, 8:15 and 10:05 p.m.
Metropolitan—"Lost Continent"; 11:45 a.m., 1:45, 3:45, 5:45, 7:45 and 9:45 p.m.
National—"My Friend Flicka"; 11:05 a.m., 2:10, 5:15 and 8:25 p.m.
Ontario—"Books Malone"; 1:35, 3:40, 5:40, 7:50 and 10 p.m.
Palace—"Quo Vadis"; 11:35 a.m., 2:45, 5:55 and 8:05 p.m.
Pix—"Love Happy"; 2:05, 4:40, 7:30 and 10:10 p.m.
Playhouse—"The Red Shoes"; 11:10 a.m., 1:35, 4:05, 6:40 and 9:10 p.m.
Plaza—"The Lavender Hill Mob"; 10:50 a.m., 12:25, 2:00, 3:55, 5:15, 6:50, 8:30 and 10:05 p.m.
Trans-Lux—"A Place in the Sun"; 10:55 a.m., 1:05, 3:15, 5:30, 7:40 and 9:55 p.m.
Warner—"Another Man's Poison"; 11:30 a.m., 1:15, 3:25, 5:35, 7:40 and 9:50 p.m.

EVENING PARKING
50¢
CAPITAL GARAGE
1320 N. Y. Ave. N.W.
Between 13th and 14th

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